5. The NGOs should have skilled specialists in their organization.

6. The organization should not have any criminal cases against them and have a local office and infrastructure.

(d) The Watershed Department Programmes are implemented as per the guidelines.

Leasing of Slipway Facilities at Ports in Kerala

1803. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the integrated fisheries project at Kochi is having a one well-run slipway with trolley and other facilities;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to make available above facility to Kerala on lease for 99 years;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Competent Authority of Kerala, in October, 2003, represented to the Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, to make available above slipway facility to Port Department, Kerala on lease; and

(e) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No decision to transfer slipway facility to Port Department, Kerala was taken.

Deficiency in Rainfall

1804. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite an early onset of monsoon, the Indian Meteorological Department, has made a downward revision of monsoon forecast and if so, the likely extent of deficiency;

(b) to what extent, Government expect this deficiency in rainfall will affect the crop yield for various grains and pulses; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to prevent spiralling of grains and pulses prices in the market due to speculations over the deficient monsoons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), this year, the monsoon arrived over Kerala early on 26th May 2006. No one-to-one correspondence seems to exist between the monsoon onset and rainfall over the country. In the first stage forecast issued in April, 2006, the IMD indicated that South-West monsoon rainfall over the country as a whole would be 93% with the model error of +_5% of Long Period Average (LPA). In the update issued in June 2006, IMD revised the forecast as 92% of LPA with the model error of +_4%. As per the latest information provided by IMD, monsoon rainfall during the season so far (1st June 2006 to 8th August 2006), has been 515.5 mm against the long period average (normal) of 530.0 mm resulting in the deficiency of only 3% with respect to LPA.

(b) As the aggregate monsoon rainfalls in the country have been more or less normal so far, it is too early to assess impact on crop yield.

(c) Government regularly reviews the crop weather situation in the country through weekly Crop Weather Watch Group Meetings held in the Ministry of Agriculture, where the representatives of all the Departments/agencies dealing with weather, water, seed, fertilizers, pesticides, credit, procurement, prices etc. participate and discuss the situation in the country. Based on the deliberations in the meeting, necessary instructions are issued to concerned agencies for necessary action. Crop advisories are issued to mitigate the effects of less rainfall and to diversify the cropping system, wherever necessary.

The market prices of certain commodities such as wheat, sugar and pulses rose recently. Government has already taken steps to arrest the increase in prices by taking measures such as augmenting domestic supplies through imports at reduced duty rates, ban on exports of pulses and sugar and regular monitoring of prices. Other steps taken include advice to State Governments to initiate steps to ensure availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices.